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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Schuylkill Center Inaugurates Dick James Lecture Series

Local Author and Professor Doug Tallamy to Speak on Native Plants



PHILADELPHIA, PA (February 3, 2012) – The Schuylkill Center for Environmental Education announces the unveiling of a new program, the annual Richard L. James Lecture, established in memory of founding executive director Dick James, the charismatic educator, writer and radio personality that led the organization from 1965 until his retirement in 1996.

The inaugural lecture, to be held on Thursday, March 8, at 7:30 p.m. at Cathedral Village’s auditorium on Ridge Avenue and Cathedral Road in Roxborough, is presented by another charismatic teacher, professor Doug Tallamy, author of the groundbreaking book, *Bringing Nature Home: How You Can Sustain Wildlife with Native Plants*.

“Dick left behind an astonishing legacy,” noted SCEE’s new executive director Mike Weilbacher, who worked for James in the 1980s. “The Schuylkill Center was one of the first, and remains the largest, nature center in a big city, with groundbreaking programming imitated nationwide. Dick was always ahead of his time.”

The James lecture will annually bring leading environmental voices to the center to discuss cutting-edge environmental issues, “and the loss of native plants from deer over-browse and crowding out by invasive alien plants is the signature environmental issue facing our center’s forests and fields right now,” said Weilbacher.

Dr. Tallamy is professor of entomology at the University of Delaware and a celebrated speaker. His book has become the leading work on the importance of returning native plants to the landscape. “This lecture is especially designed for home gardeners, as weaving native plants into our yards is one of the most important environmental actions anyone can take,” concluded Weilbacher.

Bringing Nature Home is on sale at the Schuylkill Center’s bookstore, and will be available that evening as well.

Dick James passed away in 1998, only a few years after his retirement, and is buried at the center. The center was a family affair for the Jameses, and members of Dick’s family, including his wife Karin, longtime Schuylkill Center librarian, and son Andy, longtime land manager, will be attending the lecture. Andy will say a few words to set the evening’s tone.

The lecture is free to Schuylkill Center members and \$10 for nonmembers. Tickets will be available at the door, or can be reserved in advance by calling the center at 215-482-7300, extension 110.

What: First Annual Richard L. James Lecture

When: Thursday, March 8, at 7:30 p.m

Where: Cathedral Village Auditorium

600 East Cathedral Road, Philadelphia, PA 19128

Cost: FREE to Schuylkill Center members; \$10 to non-members

Founded in 1965, the Schuylkill Center for Environmental Education (SCEE) is one of the first urban environmental education centers in the country. It encompasses over 340 acres of privately held land in the Roxborough neighborhood of Philadelphia. SCEE’s mission is to promote the preservation and improvement of our natural environment through education, outreach and the conservation of its land.

Photos: (left) Dick James (right) Doug Tallamy

For more information, photos or interviews please contact:

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